



SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Presents

TCU Symphony Orchestra

Dr. Germán Gutiérrez, Music Director and Conductor

Pre-concert Talk by Dr. Tim Watkins

March 12th, 2026

7:00pm

Van Cliburn Concert Hall at TCU

Program

Pavane for a Dead Princess
For *Petite Orchestra*

Maurice Ravel
(1875 - 1937)

Stephanie Morera, Conductor
DMA Graduate Student

Violin Concerto, Op. 14
I. Allegro
II. Andante
III. Presto in moto perpetuo

Samuel Barber
(1910 – 1981)

Dr. Elisabeth Adkins, Violin
Violin Professor at TCU

Intermission

The Firebird
Suite (1919 Revision)

Ígor Stravinski
(1882 – 1971)

I. Introduction
II. The Firebird and its Dance
III. The Princesses' Khorovod (Rondo)
IV. Infernal Dance of King Kashchei
V. Lullaby
VI. Finale

Featuring Ballet Frontier of Texas
Directors Chung Lin Tseng and Enrica Tseng

Dr. Germán Augusto Gutiérrez

Dr. Germán Augusto Gutiérrez has served as the Director of Orchestras and Professor of Orchestral Studies at Texas Christian University (TCU) since 1996. His career as a guest conductor spans almost three decades with performances on six continents. Since 2000, Dr. Gutiérrez has also served as Music Director of the Fort Worth Youth Orchestra (FWYO), elevating the ensemble to new artistic heights and expanding its international reach.

Notable engagements include the Lebanon National Philharmonic Orchestra, the Bogotá Philharmonic Orchestra, the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra in New Zealand, a performance of Carmina Burana with the Czech National Symphony Orchestra at the Smetana Hall in Prague and a CD recording and televised performance of tango music with the Binelli-Ferman Duo and City Chamber Orchestra of Hong Kong. Further guest appearances in Spain, Brazil, Argentina, South Africa and Mainland China are testament to his global versatility and artistic reach.

For twelve consecutive years Germán Augusto Gutiérrez served as the guest conductor for the Dallas Symphony Orchestra's Hispanic Festival where he built a reputation for championing Latin American music and fostering cultural inclusion.

His academic and artistic achievements at TCU have garnered numerous accolades and include the Dean's Teaching Award and the Dean's Award for Research and Creative Activity. In 2024 the TCU Symphony Orchestra earned national recognition as the American Prize's Best College/University Orchestra of 2024.

His academic excellence has been recognized with numerous honors, including induction into the Illinois State University Hall of Fame and an invitation to deliver the 2018 Commencement Address. At TCU, his accolades include the Dean's Teaching Award, Dean's Award for Research and Creative Activity, and the Chancellor's Award for Distinguished Research and Creative Activity.

Dr. Tim Watkins

Tim Watkins is Associate Professor of Musicology at Texas Christian University, where he teaches courses in both music history and world music. His research centers on the musical consequences of the encounter between European and Indigenous cultures in the Americas. His articles and reviews have appeared in various peer-reviewed scholarly journals as well as *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, *The Garland Handbook of Latin American Music*, *The Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments*, and elsewhere.

He is the editor of *Performance Practice: Issues and Approaches*, published by Steglein Press, and is currently working on two different books on Paraguayan music.



Dr. Elisabeth Adkins, Violin

Professor of Violin, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, TX

Elisabeth Adkins' richly varied musical life makes her equally at home in solo, orchestral, and chamber music repertoire. At the age of 25, she was awarded the position of Associate Concertmaster of the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) in Washington, D.C. by Music Director Mstislav Rostropovich. Over an orchestral career that spans four decades, she has worked closely with the most celebrated conductors, composers and soloists of our time. Ms. Adkins appeared with the NSO as concerto soloist on numerous occasions, including at the special request of the late Iona Brown, whom she joined in Bach's Concerto for Two Violins. She has also appeared as soloist with the Dallas, Seattle, and Baltimore Symphonies. Other performances include concertos by Beethoven, Bruch, Glazunov, Saint-Saëns, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Vivaldi, and Prokofiev. Since arriving in Fort Worth, she has performed concertos with the Fort Worth Youth Orchestra and the TCU Symphony, both under the direction of Germán Gutiérrez, and with the Corpus Christi Symphony, the Richardson Symphony, the Plano Symphony and the Sherman Symphony.



Ms. Adkins collaborates with her husband, pianist Edward Newman, in a violin/piano duo. While resident in Washington, their National Gallery recital was chosen to inaugurate WETA's series Front Row Washington. In addition to frequent appearances at the Kennedy Center and throughout the mid-Atlantic region, the duo was featured at a special concert for both houses of Congress in the Capitol Rotunda.

Ms. Adkins is a noted interpreter of the contemporary repertoire. As the longtime solo violinist with the 21st Century Consort, directed by Christopher Kendall, she premiered and recorded a number of works and has been a favorite collaborator for many American composers. She served as concertmaster of the Smithsonian Chamber Orchestra. Ms. Adkins was a founding member of the American Chamber Players and recorded with the group on Koch International Classics.

In great demand as teacher and coach, Ms. Adkins served on the faculty of the University of Maryland, the National Orchestral Institute, the Wintergreen Summer Festival and Academy, and the NSO's Youth Fellowship Program. Her positions on the faculty of both the NSO's Summer Music Institute and the National Orchestral Institute at the University of Maryland, and as guest artist at the Round Top Festival have allowed her to work intensively with young people interested in pursuing orchestral careers.

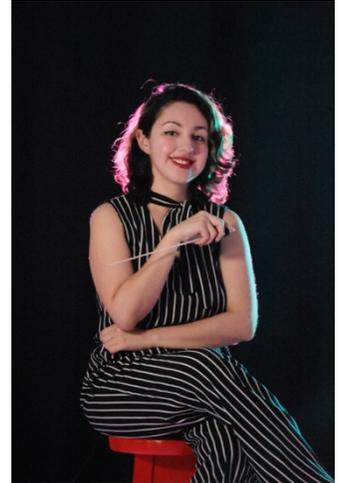
In August of 2014, after thirty-one seasons with the NSO, Ms. Adkins was invited to join the faculty of Texas Christian University School of Music in Fort Worth. She welcomes the opportunity to focus on teaching and training at the college and graduate levels, while continuing to perform solo, orchestral and chamber music. She joined several of her siblings as the resident quartet for the Piano Texas festival; the group played most of the major works of Brahms and Schumann for strings and piano in an intensive three-day chamber music weekend, joined by pianists Vadym Kholodenko, Davide Cabassi, and John Owings. Ms. Adkins serves as concertmaster for the Richardson, Plano, and Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestras.

Stephanie Morera Cordoba

Stephanie Morera is a Costa Rican conductor whose work spans orchestral performance, education, and artistic collaboration across international settings. From 2023 to 2025, she served as Assistant Conductor of the Georgia Philharmonic and the Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestras of Atlanta, and conducted the Georgia State University Campus Orchestra while completing her graduate studies. She has also worked with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra's Education Department through its early childhood outreach initiatives and coached chamber ensembles within youth orchestra programs.

Morera holds a Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting from Georgia State University (2025), where she studied with Dr. Tamara Dworetz. She is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts in Orchestral Conducting at Texas Christian University and serves as Assistant Conductor of the Fort Worth Youth Symphony Orchestra. Her professional development includes masterclasses with distinguished conductors such as Carl St. Clair, Giancarlo Guerrero, Gary Lewis, Farkhad Khudiyev, Ankush Kumar Bahl, and Alejandro Gutiérrez, and participation in the 2025 *CODA Conference Masterclass* and the *Girls Who Conduct + Atlanta Symphony Orchestra* Conducting Masterclass.

Morera continues to build a multifaceted career as a conductor and educator, recognized for her expressive leadership and commitment to musical excellence.



Ballet Frontier of Texas

Established in 2009 as a nonprofit professional dance company, Ballet Frontier of Texas is dedicated to providing a powerful cultural experience, encompassing outstanding artistic quality and talent with critically acclaimed choreography. Founded by current Artistic Director Chung-Lin Tseng, Ballet Frontier consists of a phenomenal mix of dancers from around the world.

Ballet Frontier's performance home is in Fort Worth and it expands its impact through regional and international touring opportunities. The company has performed in Dallas, Waco, Granbury, and Kerrville, Texas as well as Seoul, South Korea, and has been invited to tour in Malaysia and Japan. Ballet Frontier is primarily a classical ballet company with a distinguished focus on the collaboration between high caliber professional dancers and the next generation of aspiring artists.



The company performs and tours a diverse range of dance works such as classics like *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, and *The Nutcracker*, in addition to newer works like *Carmen*, co-choreographed by Mr. Tseng. Beyond its productions, Ballet Frontier also offers special programs such as school performances and on-campus dance classes for elementary through high school students that are essential to the company's commitment to community outreach.

Firebird Synopsis

The *Firebird* ballet begins with the Russian Tsar Kashchei, who is wandering through his extravagant garden, searching for the golden apple that will make him immortal. Although the apple promises eternal life, the Tsar becomes an evil ruler, and the kingdom falls into never-ending despair.

One day, the fairytale's hero, Prince Ivan, follows a brilliant red bird onto Kashchei's estate. The Firebird begins to dance and is surrounded by four brilliant flames. Prince Ivan chases the Firebird and catches it. The Firebird begs for its life. In exchange for freedom, the Firebird agrees to protect Ivan by giving him a magnificent crimson-colored feather.

On his journey, Prince Ivan sees thirteen exquisite princesses in the garden. He falls in love with one of them, named Helen, and asks Tsar Kashchei for her hand in marriage. Kashchei objects by sending his sinister and monstrous creatures to kill Ivan. The Firebird, true to its pledge, intervenes, bewitching the creatures into an elaborate and frantic dance (the "Infernal Dance").

Exhausted, the creatures and Kashchei fall asleep. When Kashchei awakens, the Firebird casts a spell, sending him into another devilish dance. The Firebird reveals the secret to Kashchei's immortality: his soul is contained inside an enormous, magical egg. Ivan destroys the egg, and the evil spirit leaves Kashchei's body. With the spell broken, the creatures transform back to their original human forms. The whole kingdom celebrates the wedding of Ivan and Helen.

Firebird Cast

Firebird	Carlin Dixon	Creatures/Children	Amelia Abucejo
Prince Ivan	Kyle Baird		Phoenyx Burdine
Princess Helen	Abigail Richards		Corinne Calvin
Kastchei, Evil Guy	Masanao Ito		Grace Carson
			Lilly Cashion
Fire Elements	Emma Parnell		Kevin Dakake
	Soujourm Gudorf-Johnston		Theo Greene
	Beatrice Reyes		Juneau Grundy
	Caterina Brown		Louisa Hooten
			Chloe Katkic
Princesses	Jessica Barber		Rosalie Loya
	Caroline Baggs		Alexis Needle
	Rilyn Braddock		Zachary Nunn
	Kera Fernstrom		Jolie Skye Roberts
	Kristina Gallant		Bella Silva
	Morgan Holloway		Margaret Struc
	Lylah Mills		Ashleigh Wells
	Paris Mills		Madison Wilson
	Bennett Ross		
	Adah Runyan-Randruut		
	Augusta Vining		
	Dylan Wills		

TCU Symphony Orchestra

Violin I

Liz Valentina Muñoz Morales *Colombia**
Oriana González *Venezuela+*
Angelene Ku *Norman, OK*
Dustin Cunningham *Houston, TX*
Laura Pollack *Edmond, OK*
Muyan Xin *China*
Victoria Phan *Fort Worth, TX*
Eden Agabs *NJ*
Arnaldo Figueroa *Venezuela*

Violin II

Danielle Barbosa *São Paulo, Brasil*
Alejandro Sánchez *Colombia*
June Kim *South Korea*
Eva Renaudat *Colombia*
Kate Johnson *Long Beach, CA*
Amalia Torrealba Adames *Houston, TX*
Emma Swank *Tulsa, OK*
Gabriela Cruz *Dallas TX*
Chase Morrison *Argyle, TX*

Viola

Joey Tullis *Fort Worth, TX*
Lina Gomez *Colombia*
Sarah Fuentes *Mansfield, TX*
Juan Duran Chang *Venezuela*
Naiomy Jimenez Alba *Puerto Rico*
Abby Douglas *Granbury, TX*
Kaylan Walker *Tomball, TX*

Cello

Caio De Godoy Sousa *Brazil*
Nancy Olivares *Mexico*
Daniela Herrera Garcia *Colombia*
Giuliano Bucheli *San Antonio, TX*
Nathan Hoang *Murphy, TX*
Jayme Eck *Albuquerque, NM*
Bentley Altman *Anchorage, Alaska*
Jason Vierra *Ewa Beach, Hawaii*
Arnav Agarwal *Plano, TX*
Kurt Kowar *CO*

Double Bass

Kaleb Comstock *San Antonio, TX*
James Tsang *Naples, FL*
Sixto Elizondo V *San Antonio, TX*
Arturo Zamora *San Antonio, TX*
David Gutierrez *Mesquite, TX*
Graysen Malek *McKinney, TX*
Preston Quintero *McKinney, TX*
Quinn Judge *Saint Louis, MO*

Flute

Abby Losos *Aledo, TX*
Derek Smilowski *Philadelphia, PA*

Oboe

Lauren Hanifan *The Colony, TX*
Chloe Caudill *Fort Worth, TX*
Bella Evans *Richardson, TX*
Lincoln Orwosky *Mt. Vernon, TX*
Edgar Vazquez *Fort Worth, TX*

Clarinet

Ryan Rodarte *Wylie, TX*
Samuel Brown *Philadelphia, PA*
Pablo Albert *Keller, TX*
Dawson Bauman-Herl *Hurst, TX*

Bassoon

Landon Peugh *Arlington, TX*
Diego Llamas *Crowley, TX*

Horn

Nick Spires *Burleson, TX*
Nicolas Hernandez *Fort Worth, TX*
Claire Nelson *Frisco, TX*
Roger Gonzalez *Palestine, TX*
Cole Reed *Flower Mound, TX*
Ethan Hildebrand *Eules, TX*

Trumpet

Eric Liu *Suzhou, China*
Emanuel Arellano *Fort Worth, TX*
Dhruv Patel *Roanoke, TX*

Trombone

Nick Shea *Mansfield, TX*
Hannah Luna *Fort Worth, TX*

Bass Trombone

Zarrhias Sanders *Arlington, TX*

Tuba

Luke Hardegree

Timpani/Percussion

Logan Scott *Georgetown, TX*
Matthew Bartley *Canton, TX*
Leighann Crockett *Forney, TX*
Jaden Guinto *Cypress, TX*
Ahmad Elijah *Spring, TX*
Matthew Hroch *Arlington, TX*
Haley Bruns *McKinney, TX*
Chaya Bray *Burleson, TX*
Brandon Davidson *Flower Mound, TX*
Christian Maakestad *Robins, IA*

Piano

Syuzanna Kaszo *Ukraine*

Harp

Silvia Torres Rodarte *Mexico*
Lauren Holder

*Concertmaster for *The Firebird*
+Concertmaster for *Barber/Ravel*

Program Notes

Ravel – Pavane for a Dead Princess

Pavane pour une infante defunte (Pavane for a Dead Princess) was commissioned of the 24-year-old Ravel in 1899 as a somewhat whimsical salon piece for piano and premiered in 1902 by Ricardo Vines to much acclaim. The composer was a bit bewildered by the work's popularity, but nonetheless orchestrated it in 1910 to even greater success.

With the Pavane, by contrast, we see his love of older musical forms from the Renaissance, in this case a moderately paced court dance. He chose the title because he was fond of the sonority of the French words (“infante defunte”) and the piece was not meant to be a funeral lament for a child. Rather, Ravel hoped to evoke the scene of a young Spanish princess delighting in this stately dance in quiet reverie, as would have been painted by Velazquez in the Spanish court.

What the Pavane gives us is Ravel's gift for exquisite melody and his mastery of orchestration. Its perfectly balanced sections between strings, woodwinds and golden glowing brass create a quiescent, inner-splendor; dance-like but meditative. Ravel's cleverness with pizzicato propels the dance along with graceful but slightly shuffling feet; the harp glissandos swoop with the young dancer's lifting arms.

- Max Derrickson

Barber – Violin Concerto, Op 14

The story of the origin and compositional history of Samuel Barber's Violin Concerto reads like a soap opera—literally. Its commission came from the laundry soap manufacturer, Samuel Fels (of the Fels Naptha fortune), whose adopted son, Iso (née Isaak) Briselli, was an accomplished violinist, born and schooled, along with many of the great violinists of the twentieth century (David and Igor Oistrakh, Nathan Milstein, Joseph Roisman, Dmitry Sitkovetsky, and others), in the Ukrainian port city of Odessa. Barber was recommended to Fels by Gama Gilbert, a former violin student of the famous teacher, Carl Flesch. Fels offered Barber \$1,000 for the concerto—a handsome sum in those days, with half to be paid down, and the other half to be paid upon delivery.

What happened next is shrouded in some mystery and controversy. Evidently, Briselli was very unhappy with the *Presto in moto perpetuo* final movement. Part of the controversy rests on the claim, once given common currency, that Briselli found the solo part of the finale “unplayable.” Another version has it that he found the movement to be too “light weight” in comparison to the first two movements. Yet another version suggests that he found the finale's harmonies, shifting meters, and chromaticism too “modern” for his taste. Whether any of these stories is true may never be known, but thanks to Barbara Heyman's authoritative biography of the composer, we can be sure that Briselli's unhappiness was real enough, despite Barber's attempts to demonstrate the movement's playability and suitability. By this time, the composer began referring to his “concertino” as his *concerto da sapone* (a double-entendre, if ever there was one!). Briselli never performed “his” concerto, and the first public performance was given by Albert Spalding and the Philadelphia Orchestra (Eugene Ormandy conducting) on February 7, 1941, to great critical acclaim.

Despite its initial positive reviews, Barber's Violin Concerto would have to wait a while before entering into the solo violinists' core repertory. Among its most ardent champions have been Jaime Laredo and the late Isaac Stern. Many other major artists have made it a regular part of their concerto repertoire, much to their own

delight, and that of audiences around the world. It has taken its place in history, not only as a wonderful example of Americana, but as one of the great violin concertos.

The first movement, *Allegro*, is a portrait of lyricism itself (Barber was an important composer of opera and vocal music). The romantic opening melody is joined with a whimsical quality brought about through a gentle concluding idea with its distinctive and unforgettable “scotch snap” (short-long) rhythm. While most of the movement is characterized by gentleness, pain too makes its appearance, especially at the start of the central development section. The *Andante* begins with a ravishing melody in the oboe (one might think of the second movement of Brahms’s Violin Concerto here). Modern audiences, upon hearing the finale, might well wonder what all the fuss was about. Its rapid-fire motion dispels the implied energy of the earlier movements, all the while giving the soloist ample challenges and opportunities for technical fireworks.

- David B. Levy

The Firebird Suite (1919 version)

It’s intriguing to speculate how the history of music in the last century would have been altered if the extraordinary ballet impresario Serge Diaghilev had not decided to gamble on the young, relatively unknown Stravinsky. Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes—which the émigré Russian had established in Paris—was just starting to take the West by storm, and Diaghilev wanted a splendid new production for the climax of its season in 1910. His initial plans for better-known composers fell through, so Diaghilev, on a hunch, gave the commission to Stravinsky, then in his late 20s. It was a risk for everyone concerned, since *The Firebird* would be the first production by the emerging ballet company to feature an entirely new score.

Stravinsky was handed a scenario (devised in part by choreographer Michel Fokine) that drew on old Russian folklore. *The Firebird* tells of the downfall of a powerful, ogre-like figure of evil, Kastchei the Deathless, who seizes young princesses as captives while turning the knights who arrive to rescue them into stone. The protagonist Crown Prince Ivan enlists the Firebird, so called for her beautiful feathers that glitter and flicker like flames, to help destroy Kastchei and free his victims.

You can readily hear how Stravinsky’s own imagination must have caught fire (he even set aside his work on a bird of a different feather—the fairy-tale opera *The Nightingale*) when he took up Diaghilev’s invitation. *The Firebird*’s score blends the orchestral wizardry Stravinsky had learned as a student of Rimsky-Korsakov with the vitality of Russian folk music to yield a dazzling, evocative atmosphere. Throughout his later career, Stravinsky remained especially fond of *The Firebird*, returning to create three concert versions that he himself conducted tirelessly (a savvy financial move on the composer’s part). The most popular is the second of these suites, introduced in 1919, which uses less than half of the original ballet score and simplifies some of its orchestration.

The Firebird’s musical language shifts between chromatic gestures to illustrate the supernatural dimension (including a powerful non-Western scale that would later feature in *The Rite of Spring*’s harmonic vocabulary) and the singsong simplicity of folk song for the mortals. The suite opens with a spooky conjuring, low in the strings, of Kastchei’s magical realm. In his illusory garden, Prince Ivan encounters the Firebird, which is depicted with opulent colors and radiant trills. (Diaghilev spared no expense in the similarly gorgeous costumes Léon Bakst designed for this creature.) A calmly pastoral section follows, featuring Stravinsky’s already characteristically imaginative scoring for woodwinds. Prince Ivan observes the princesses who have been captured by Kastchei performing their ritual Khorovod, or round dance, and falls in love with the one destined to be his bride.

To protect Ivan, the Firebird casts a spell over Kastchei and his monstrous aides. Whipped into motion by Stravinsky's frenetic rhythms, they are compelled to dance themselves to exhaustion in a savage "Infernal Dance." Their paroxysms subside, while a serene lullaby ("Berceuse") lulls the hypnotized Kastchei to sleep, its lazy tune first given by the bassoon. Ivan is instructed to destroy the giant egg containing the ogre's soul, and Kastchei's power vanishes. A solo horn, intoning the score's most famous folk tune, announces the joyful arrival of sunlight. Together with Ivan and his betrothed, the rescued captives celebrate with music that swells and rings out in glorious triumph. *The Firebird* clearly shows Stravinsky on the cusp of a new world, mixing the orchestral mastery of his Russian mentors with the rhythmic vitality of the revolutionary about to burst out of his shell.

- Thomas May